

NEW MUSIC CONCERTS
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20th ANNIVERSARY

1990-91 SEASON

*New Music Concerts
& Music Toronto
present*

I'Ensemble InterContemporain Chamber Music Concert

Royal Conservatory of Music, Concert Hall
Friday, May 17, 1991 8:00 pm

Steve Reich

Clapping Music (1972) is a piece which requires "no instrument other than the human body"; the only source of sound is the same one used by the public in the concert ritual: clapping the hands together - applauding! Of the two performers of *Clapping Music*, one plays a fixed role, repeating a single motif from beginning to end. The other must execute this same motif, at first in a strictly synchronous manner, then abruptly displacing it by one beat after each cycle of twelve identical repetitions. *Clapping Music* ends when the rhythmic progression has come full circle, the second performer having returned to his original point of departure.

Marimba Phase is an adaption of *Piano Phase*, composed in 1967. Since Reich is a percussionist, and generally treats the piano as a percussion instrument (in part, he says, in order to allow him to play in his own compositions despite his limited keyboard technique) this seems entirely appropriate. Reich uses the word *phase* in the physicist's sense: two identical rhythmic and melodic patterns are played simultaneously, one just slightly faster than the other. The result is that the two players start out simultaneous, gradually drifting out of synchrony and back in again. The phase relation of the two parts is said to shift. New melodic patterns emerge from the texture and gradually fade back into it as the music progresses. For about fifteen years, from 1965 to 1981 most of Reich's music was constructed on this principle, including a *Violin Phase* for four violins, *Phase Patterns* for four electric organs, and *Drumming*, for percussion, voices, whistling and piccolo. Performing these works demands intense concentration and lengthy rehearsal; Reich tries to be a part of the performing ensemble whenever possible, in order to modify the work along with the other players as it is prepared for performance. Steve Reich writes: "Although there is always a system working itself out in my music, there would be no interest in the music if it were merely systematic. You want to hear music that moves you, and if you don't, then you're not really anxious to find out how it was put together. The truth is, musical intuition is at the rock bottom level of everything I've ever done."

Luciano Berio

Berio had a traditional upbringing in a musical family in Italy, and his earlier works are in the neo-classical vein of the times. He gradually became aware of more modern music, particularly as a result of a visit to the United States in 1951, which kindled his interest in electronic music. He moved to the United States in 1963 and stayed until 1972; when he left, Berio said it was because he was tired of teaching. "I began to feel like a dentist" was how he put it. He now works in Italy and France. His works include a wide variety of experimental approaches to sound production, but he considers it essential to remain aware of past musical experience. In this sense he is still a traditionalist, with a particular interest in "exploring the continuity of musical process." *Call* is a fanfare, first performed in St. Louis in 1985.

Pierre Boulez

Initiale was composed for the opening of the Menil Collection Museum in Houston, where it had its first performance in June, 1987. Its title recalls this event, and also conveys the composer's intention to enlarge the piece, since he regards it as the "initial" part of a "work in progress". This has been a frequent method used by Boulez to develop new works. The work as we hear it now lasts barely two and a half minutes, but will be made larger and richer, in part by the addition of a percussion ensemble. When Stravinsky composed his *Fanfare for a New Theatre*, he underlined the ceremonial character of the fanfare. Boulez, on the contrary, sought to show that writing for brass need not be ceremonial, emphatic, nor for that matter military. Rather, he was concerned to show that this was a chamber ensemble, with all the expected subtlety and fluidity. The forces are divided into two trios (trumpets, horn and trombone), with the tuba joining the two. The parts of *Initiale* are clearly distinguished by their manner of writing: rising and falling, overlapping scale passages are followed by staccato and sustained chords, reaching a great climax. The musical line is often divided among different instruments, giving rise to a "melody of musical colour". The listener may wish to imagine the future text to which this colourful beginning is an introduction, somewhat like the decorated capital at the beginning of an illuminated manuscript.

Franco Donatoni

Franco Donatoni (b.1927) stands among the living masters of contemporary Italian music. His abstract style rejects a definitive or in any way schematicized categorization; there is an acceptance of uncertainty, and above all, an intolerance of such a theorization of the musical message. Rather, Donatoni's music suggests convergent realities, hints of things to come, a language in continual evolution, and inexorably mobile outlines of a designed "decomposition". *Omar*, two pieces for vibraphone dedicated to the percussionist Maurizio Ben Omar, goes back to 1985. As the composer notes, "It would be truly irritating, as well as useless, to attribute to a composition formal contents which cannot go beyond the instrumental specifics. Thus, they are instead given room for expression and, passing through the medium of the vibraphone, maintain as much similarity as possible with the interpretive gestures of the performer, which they had virtually suggested to him in the first place."

Elliott Carter

Elliott Carter belongs to the first generation of truly "modern" American composers. He grew up under the influence of Charles Ives, and although he studied for a time with Nadia Boulanger, he resisted her influence and sought from his earliest years to find new means of musical expression, with as little dependence as possible on the music of earlier composers, or even on his own earlier works. His **Brass Quintet** was commissioned by the American Brass Quintet and written during the summer of 1974 in Aspen, where both the composer and the performers were in residence. Carter was thus able to try out passages as the work was being composed. In writing for brass quintet problems of balance and tone colour are not easily overcome. Carter's solution is to make the work into a collage of small duos and trios, using all the possible combinations of instruments, and linking these by 'quodlibets' in which all five players participate, displaying their individual characteristics. Each duo or trio is also based on its own distinctive interval. The scheme looks like this:

Quodlibet 1

Trio 1 - two trumpets & first trombone- minor sixth - 'lightly'

Duo 1 - horn & second trombone-perfect fourth- 'vigourously'

Quodlibet 2

Duo 2 - second trumpet & horn- minor third - 'humourously'

Trio 2 - first trumpet, horn, second trombone -
perfect fifth - 'majestically'

Quodlibet 3

Trio 3 - trumpets & horn- major second - 'smoothly flowing'

Duo 3 - two trombones - major third - 'extravagant'

Quodlibet 4

Trio 4 - first trumpet, trombones - major sixth - 'lyrically'

Horn cadenza - augmented fourth - 'menacingly'

Quodlibet 5

Duo 4 - trumpets - major seventh - 'furious'

Trio 5 - horn & trombones - minor second - 'angry'

Slow movement

Duo 5-second trumpet, first trombone- minor seventh- 'dramatic'

The slow movement, anticipated at the beginning and in the quodlibets is the climax of the work. The instruments quietly celebrate the pure pleasure of playing together and creating a music that is greater than the sum of its individual voices. In the course of this movement every interval is heard in an unbroken progression - a sustained harmonic meditation.

Michael Jarrell

Michael Jarrell was born in Geneva. He studied at the Conservatoire Populaire de Musique in that city, in Boston and at Tanglewood in 1978-1979, and was a student of Klaus Huber at the Staatliche Hochschule für Musik in Freiburg-im-Breisgau. He began work on an opera, *Dérives*, in 1979, which was performed in Geneva in 1985. He has worked as a fellow at IRCAM and the Villa Medici in Rome. *Assonance IV* was composed in 1990 for the Ensemble InterContemporain. The title of the work refers to the near-rhyming used in the very earliest French poetry. Two lines were said to be assonant when their last accented vowel was the same, no matter what other sounds preceded or followed them.

Jérôme Naulais

Jérôme Naulais is a trombonist with the Ensemble InterContemporain. *Labyrinthe* was his first serious composition; it was written in 1984. The title derives from the construction of the piece: the seven instruments are constantly reassorting themselves into sub-groups of various sizes. The different combinations lead us like Ariadne's thread through the instrumental labyrinth. In this respect the music resembles Elliott Carter's, but Naulais does not proceed to a psychological characterization of the instruments as Carter does. After a brief introduction, the instruments enter progressively, and join in two successive chords. The ensemble quickly breaks up, first into three groups - short, dry notes from the muted trombones and tuba, brief outbursts from the horns punctuating a sinuous duo by the trumpets. This leads to a new section based on two groups - staccato notes from the trumpets and trombones in opposition to the more melodic discourse of the horns and tuba. Another tutti leads to a long solo on the piccolo trumpet, and a return to two groups concludes the work, with rhythmic patterns from the trumpets and trombones contrasting with nervous motifs from the horns and tuba.

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present

The Brass Group of l'Ensemble InterContemporain
JACQUES DELEPLANCQUE, JENS McMANAMA, French horns
ANTOINE CURÉ. JEAN-JACQUES GAUDON, trumpets
JÉRÔME NAULAIS, BENNY SLUCHIN, trombones
GÉRARD BUQUET, tuba

and

MICHEL CERUTTI, DANIEL CIAMPOLINI, percussion
CHRISTOPHE DESJARDINS, viola

PROGRAM

Steve Reich	<i>Clapping Music</i> (1972)	6'
Luciano Berio	<i>Call</i> (1985)	4'
Pierre Boulez	<i>Initiale</i> (1987)	2'
Franco Donatoni	<i>Omar I</i> (1985)	5'
Elliott Carter	<i>Brass Quintet</i> (1974)	17'

-INTERMISSION-

Michael Jarrell	<i>Assonance IV</i> (1990)	8'
Jérôme Naulais	<i>Labyrinthe</i> (1984)	14'
Steve Reich	<i>Marimba Phase</i> (1967)	11'

This first Canadian tour by Pierre Boulez and the Ensemble InterContemporain has been sponsored by Air Canada with assistance from the Ministère des Affaires Etrangères (France), Secrétariat d'État aux Relations Culturelles Internationales, Association Française d'Action Artistique; the Touring Office and the Music Division of the Canada Council; Government of Canada Department of Communications; Nova Scotia Department of Tourism and Culture. The tour has been organized by Scotia Festival of Music in Halifax.

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The Brass Group of l'Ensemble InterContemporain

Jacques Deleplancque, Jens McManama
Antoine Curé, Jean-Jacques Gaudon
Jérôme Naulais, Benny Sluchin
Gérard Buquet

horns
trumpets
trombones
tuba

The seven brass players of l'Ensemble InterContemporain are dedicated to the promotion of a specific repertoire.

They follow two roads that are different although parallel: on the one hand they perform both traditional and contemporary repertoire with emphasis on innovative writing; and on the other hand, they seek to stimulate new composition.

Therefore, the inspiration of the past and the creations of today come together to provide wide repertoire possibilities.

Like l'Ensemble InterContemporain, the size of the group varies: they play solo, duo, trio or as a quintet or septet.

Michel Cerutti (percussion)

Michel Cerutti studied at the Metz Conservatory where he was awarded first place in piano and chamber music. He was recipient of first place in percussion at the Paris Conservatory. After working with the Orchestre de Paris, in 1976 he joined l'Ensemble InterContemporain.

Michel Cerutti is a professor at the Rouen National Conservatory and since October 1990, has been professor at the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique in Paris.

In 1981, he studied the cymbalom (a type of Hungarian xylophone) which he plays in works by Gyorgy Kurtag and Igor Stravinsky, and in the *Répons* by Pierre Boulez.

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Daniel Ciampolini (percussion)

Daniel Ciampolini was born in 1961. He won first prize in percussion in Jacques Delecluze's class at the Conservatoire National Supérieur in Paris. He joined l'Ensemble Inter-Contemporain in 1980.

In the United States, he pursued advanced studies in vibraphone technique at the Berklee College of Music in Boston.

Daniel Ciampolini's solo repertoire includes Bela Bartok's Sonata for two pianos and percussion, Elliott Carter's pieces for tympani, *Psappha* by Iannis Xenakis, and *Piano Phase* by Steve Reich.

Christophe Desjardins (viola)

Born in 1962, Christophe Desjardins won first prize in viola in 1983 at the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique in Paris. He has studied with Serge Collot and at Berlin's Hochschule with Bruno Guiranna.

Winner in the 1986 Maurice Vieux international viola competition, Christophe became solo viola at the Théâtre de la Monnaie in Brussels and until 1990 was also a member of the Monnaie String Quartet.

Christophe Desjardins is a member of l'Ensemble InterContemporain and also of the Quatuor InterContemporain.

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New Music Concerts is generously supported by The Canada Council, the Ontario Arts Council, the Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto, the Toronto Arts Council and the Ministry of Citizenship and Culture through its "Investment in the Arts" program.

